

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1-16. (canceled)

17. (currently amended) ~~A cannula and~~ An instrument holder assembly for laparoscopic surgical operations, said holder assembly comprising:

a plate member having a surrounding edge; ~~[[and]]~~

a wall surrounding said plate member, said wall being connected to said plate member all along said edge, said wall having a longitudinal axis, said plate member extending substantially transversely to said axis, said wall extending away from said plate member at least in a direction away from a patient, thereby defining together with said plate member a cup shape on a side of said plate member opposite the patient; and

a plurality of cannulas connected to and extending from said plate member inside said wall,

~~said plate member being provided with~~ said cannulas defining a plurality of separate and mutually spaced apertures for receiving respective elongate laparoscopic surgical members.

18. (currently amended) The ~~cannula and~~ instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said plate member and said wall each have a height dimension extending parallel to said axis, the height dimension of said wall being substantially greater than the height dimension of said plate member.

19. (canceled)

20. (currently amended) The ~~cannula and~~ instrument holder assembly defined in claim ~~[[20]]~~ 17 wherein said wall has at least one end portion extending as a flange to said plate member on the side of said plate member opposite the patient.

21. (currently amended) ~~A cannula and~~ An instrument holder assembly for laparoscopic surgical operations, said holder assembly comprising:

a plate member having a surrounding edge; and

a wall surrounding said plate member, said wall being connected to said plate member all along said edge, said wall having a longitudinal axis, said plate member extending substantially transversely to said axis,

said plate member being provided with a plurality of cannulas connected to and extending from said plate member inside said wall, said cannulas defining a plurality of separate apertures for receiving respective elongate laparoscopic surgical members,

wherein said wall has two end portions extending as endless or perimetrical flanges to said plate member, said end portions extending in opposite directions away from said plate member.

22. (currently amended) The ~~cannula and~~ instrument holder assembly defined in claim 20 wherein said plate member is located at one end of said wall.

23. (currently amended) The ~~cannula and~~ instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said plate member is located at one end of said wall.

24. (currently amended) The ~~cannula and~~ instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said plate member and said wall form two cup shapes.

25. (currently amended) The ~~cannula and~~ instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said wall has a first inner diameter at said plate member and a second inner diameter at an end opposite said plate member, said second inner diameter being larger than said first inner diameter.

26. (canceled)

27. (canceled)

28. (currently amended) The ~~cannula~~ and instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said plate member is flexible.

29. (currently amended) The ~~cannula~~ and instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein the cannula and instrument holder assembly consists of said plate member and said wall.

30. (canceled)

31. (canceled)

32. (currently amended) The ~~cannula~~ and instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said apertures have a longitudinal dimension extending generally parallel to said axis, at least one of said apertures having a curvilinear or arced shape along the longitudinal dimension of said one of said apertures.

33. (currently amended) The ~~cannula~~ and instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said wall is flexible.

34. (currently amended) The ~~cannula~~ and instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said wall is at least partially curved in a direction parallel to said axis.

35. (canceled)

36. (currently amended) The ~~cannula~~ and instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said wall is provided with an anchoring element for securing the holder to a patient, said anchoring element being taken from the group consisting of a hook and an eyelet.

37. (canceled)

38. (canceled)

39. (canceled)

40. (canceled)

41. (new) The instrument holder assembly defined in claim 17 wherein said cannulas all extend in a common direction away from said plate member so that said cannulas are all disposed on only on side of said plate member.